

REMARKS

Status of the claims:

With the above amendment, claims 1-4, 6 and 7 have been canceled. Claim 5 is pending and ready for further action on the merits. Reconsideration is respectfully requested in light of the following remarks.

Rejections under 35 USC §103

Claims 1-4, 6, and 7 have been rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over EP '191 (EP 118 191 A1).

Claims 1-4 have been rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP '593 (JP 10-072593 (abstract)).

These rejections are traversed for the following reasons.

Applicants have canceled all of the above rejected claims. Thus, the rejections are moot. Withdrawal of the rejections is warranted and respectfully requested.

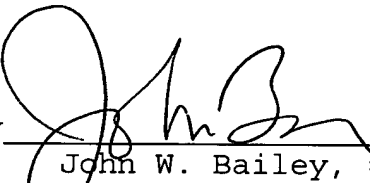
With the above remarks and amendments, Applicants believe that the claims, as they now stand, define patentable subject matter such that passage of the instant invention to allowance is warranted. A Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

If any questions remain regarding the above matters, please contact Applicant's representative, T. Benjamin Schroeder (Reg. No. 50,990), in the Washington metropolitan area at the phone number listed below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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